

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

AUDIT COMMITTEE

14 NOVEMBER 2016

1. ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2015/16

Joint report of the Chief Fire Officer and the Treasurer.

RECOMMENDED

THAT the Audit Committee notes the Annual Audit Letter (AAL) attached as an Appendix to this report.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is submitted to inform the Audit Committee of the findings of the external audit work undertaken for the audit year 2015/16 which is summarised in the AAL.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The AAL summarises the key findings from external audit work undertaken for the 2015/16 audit year. The audit comprised two elements:

- To audit and give an opinion on the Authority's financial statements.
- An assessment of the Authority's arrangements in place to enable value for money to be achieved in the use of resources.

3.2 The Annual Findings Reports presented to the Audit Committee on 25th July 2016 outlined the findings of the audit work undertaken.

- 3.3 Following the Audit Committee meeting, the auditor issued an unqualified opinion on the Authority's 2015/16 financial statements included in the Authority's Statement of Accounts.
- 3.4 As part of the external audit work programme, the auditor was also required to provide a value for money conclusion. In carrying out this work, the auditor is required to follow the National Audit Office's Auditor Guidance Note 3 (AGN 03). The AGN 03 identifies the following criterion for auditors to evaluate:
- "In all significant respects, the audited body had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for tax payers and local people."*
- 3.5 As a consequence of this work, the auditor concluded that for 2015/16 the Authority had proper arrangements in all significant respects to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness and to ensure it delivered value for money in its use of resources.
- 3.6 The Treasurer has been consulted and has agreed the content of the AAL.
- 3.7 Representatives from Grant Thornton will present and explain the findings detailed in the AAL to the Audit Committee.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out. The matters contained in this report will not lead to and/or do not relate to a policy change.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is a legal requirement for the Authority to consider the AAL Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 234 – The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The agreed scale fee for the provision of external audit services for the audit year 2015/16 was £38,636.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Audit Findings 2015/16 – Agenda item 4 – Audit Committee
25th July 2016.

The contact officer for this report is Deputy Chief Fire Officer Philip Hales, telephone number 0121 380 6907.

PHIL LOACH
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

MIKE GRIFFITHS
TREASURER